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FAVORITE

Holiday Cookies



JAM BITES

MAKES 4 dozen cookies **PREP** 10 minutes
CHILL 20 minutes **BAKE** at 350° for 20 minutes

- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, softened**
- ½ cup sugar**
- 1 large egg yolk**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract**
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- ¼ cup apricot preserves**
- ¼ cup natural almonds (with skins), chopped**
- ¼ cup seedless red-raspberry jam**

① In large bowl, beat butter, sugar, yolk, salt and extract until creamy, 2 minutes. On low, beat in flour until blended; press into ball. Divide dough into quarters; press into ball. Roll one quarter into 12-inch rope, 1 inch wide. Place on large ungreased baking sheet. With end of wooden spoon, make ½-inch-wide, ¼-inch-deep groove down center of rope. Repeat with remaining dough; place 2 inches apart on sheet.

② In small cup, combine preserves with 2 tablespoons nuts. In another cup, combine jam with remaining nuts. Spoon apricot mixture into grooves of 2 strips; spoon raspberry mixture in other 2 strips. Refrigerate 20 minutes.

③ Heat oven to 350°. Cut each strip crosswise into 1-inch diagonal slices, but do not separate. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes, until edges are lightly golden. While still warm, cut through. Remove to wire rack; let cool.

PER COOKIE 69 cal, 3g fat (2g sat), 12mg chol, 26mg sodium, 9g carb, 0g fiber, 1g protein

Jam Bites photography by Mark Thomas



CHOCOLATE-CHIP SHORTBREAD

MAKES 16 cookies **PREP** 5 minutes
CHILL 2 hours **BAKE** at 350° for 30 minutes

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- ½ teaspoon baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened**
- ¾ cup sugar**
- 1 egg**
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- ½ cup mini semisweet chocolate chips**
- 3 tablespoons seedless raspberry preserves**

① In a medium-size bowl, whisk together

flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.

② In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar until smooth, about 2 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla. On low speed, beat in flour mixture until just combined. Stir in mini semisweet chocolate chips. Form into a disk and refrigerate for 2 hours.

③ Heat oven to 350°. Press dough into a 9-inch round fluted nonstick tart pan. Score into 16 pie-shaped wedges without cutting completely through dough.

④ Bake at 350° for 27 to 30 minutes. Let cool and remove side of pan. Just before serving, melt raspberry preserves and drizzle over top of tart. Cut into 16 wedges along score marks.

PER COOKIE 179 cal, 8g fat (5g sat), 28mg chol, 36mg sodium, 25g carb, 1g fiber, 2g protein



CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT COOKIES

MAKES 2½ dozen cookies **PREP** 10 minutes
BAKE at 325° for 18 minutes **MICROWAVE** 2 minutes

- 4 ounces semisweet chocolate, broken up
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon mint extract
- 4 ounces white chocolate, broken up
- ½ teaspoon vegetable oil
- 12 starlight candies, crushed, or ⅓ cup crushed candy canes

① Heat oven to 325°. Butter two large baking sheets.

② Place chocolate in microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for 1 minute, then stir until smooth. Let cool 5 minutes.

③ Beat butter and sugar in a large bowl until blended. Beat in cooled chocolate. Add eggs and beat until smooth. Stir in flour, salt and cocoa powder until a soft dough forms. Beat in mint extract.

④ Drop dough by tablespoonfuls onto prepared baking sheets. Bake at 325° for 18 minutes or until dry on top. Transfer to wire rack to cool.

⑤ While cookies cool, combine white chocolate and oil in glass bowl. Microwave 30 seconds; stir, then microwave another 30 seconds. Stir until smooth. Spoon about 1 teaspoon white chocolate onto each cookie, then top each with ½ teaspoon of the crushed candies. Let stand to harden for 30 minutes. Store airtight up to two weeks.

PER COOKIE 135 cal, 6g fat (4g sat), 23mg chol, 29mg sodium, 19g carb, 1g fiber, 2g protein



SWEET COCONUT SNOWBALLS

MAKES 2 dozen cookies **PREP** 10 minutes
BAKE at 350° for 15 minutes

- 1 cup sweetened flake coconut
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 ¼ cups confectioner's sugar
- Pinch salt
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 teaspoons milk

① Grind ½ cup of the coconut in food processor. Chop remaining coconut and set aside. Add flour, ¼ cup of the confectioners' sugar and the salt. Pulse to blend. Add butter and vanilla; pulse until dough comes together.

② Heat oven to 350°. Roll dough into 1-inch balls. Place dough balls 1 inch apart on an ungreased baking sheet.

③ Bake cookies until firm but tender, 15 minutes. Remove to rack; let cool completely.

④ In small bowl, stir together remaining 1 cup confectioners' sugar and enough milk until smooth but still thick. Dip cookies in glaze (about ½ teaspoon for each), letting it drip down sides. Dip in chopped coconut and set aside for glaze to dry.

PER SNOWBALL 89 cal, 4g fat (3g sat), 12g carb



HOLIDAY PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

MAKES about 4 dozen cookies **PREP** 20 minutes
BAKE at 375° for 11 minutes

- 3¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup red and green M&Ms
- ½ cup peanuts, chopped

① Heat oven to 375°. Blend flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl.

② Beat butter and peanut butter in large bowl until creamy. Beat in sugars until fluffy. Beat in eggs, 1 at a time. Add vanilla.

③ On low speed, beat flour mixture into butter mixture. Stir in ¼ cup warm water. Fold in M&Ms and nuts.

④ Drop by heaping tablespoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Flatten slightly with your hand to form a 2-inch round.

⑤ Bake at 375° for 11 minutes or until set. Cool on wire rack.

PER COOKIE 129 cal, 6g fat (2g sat), 15mg chol, 52mg sodium, 18g carb, 1g fiber, 3g protein



SUGAR COOKIE BELLS

MAKES 3 dozen cookies **PREP** 15 minutes
CHILL 4 hours **BAKE** at 350° for 12 minutes

1½ cups all-purpose flour
 ½ teaspoon baking powder
 ⅛ teaspoon salt
 ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
 ¾ cup sugar
 1 egg
 ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
 White nonpareils, for decoration (optional)

- ① In a medium-size bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
- ② In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar until smooth, about 2 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla. On low speed, beat in flour mixture until just combined. Divide the dough in half and form each half into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.
- ③ Heat oven to 350°. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one disk to ¼-inch thickness. Cut into bells using a 2-inch bell-shaped cookie cutter. Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Sprinkle with white nonpareils, gently pressing to adhere. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until lightly golden around edges. Remove cookies to wire racks to cool completely.
- ④ Repeat with remaining half of dough. Gather scraps and refrigerate. Reroll and cut into additional bells. Bake and cool as above. When completely cool, cookies may be stored in an airtight container up to 2 weeks.

PER COOKIE 60 cal, 3g fat (2g sat), 13mg chol, 16mg sodium, 8g carb, 0g fiber, 1g protein

SIMPLE LEMON BARS

MAKES 24 bars **PREP** 15 minutes
BAKE at 350° for 45 minutes

CRUST

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
 ½ cup confectioners' sugar
 ⅛ teaspoon salt
 2 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING

1¾ cups granulated sugar
 ¼ cup all-purpose flour
 4 eggs
 6 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar (for dusting)

① Heat oven to 350°. Line a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan with nonstick foil.

② **Crust.** In a large bowl, blend butter, confectioners' sugar and salt until well combined and smooth. Stir in flour until blended. Scrape into the prepared baking pan and press evenly into the bottom.

③ Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Remove from oven and set aside.

④ **Filling.** In a large bowl, beat granulated sugar, flour, eggs and lemon juice until completely smooth. Pour over crust.

⑤ Bake at 350° for 25 minutes or until no imprint remains in the filling when lightly touched in the center. Remove from oven to a wire rack and cool completely. Dust lightly with confectioners' sugar. Cut into 24 bars and serve.

PER BAR 191 cal, 9g fat (5g sat), 55mg chol, 25mg sodium, 27g carb, 0g fiber, 2g protein





BLACK-AND-WHITE COOKIES

MAKES 8 large cookies **PREP** 20 minutes

BAKE at 350° for 13 minutes per batch

COOKIES

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 egg
- ⅓ cup buttermilk

BLACK AND WHITE ICING

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons plus 4 teaspoons milk
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

① **Cookies:** Heat oven to 350°. Coat two cookie sheets with nonstick cooking spray. In medium bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt. In large bowl, with electric mixer on medium speed, beat together sugar and butter about 1 minute or until smooth and creamy. Beat in egg until well mixed. On low speed, alternately beat in flour mixture and the buttermilk, ending with flour mixture; beat until smooth.

② Onto prepared sheets, drop ¼ cup dough for each cookie, spacing about 3 inches apart.

Refrigerate one of the sheets of cookies.

③ Bake 1 sheet at a time in 350° oven for 13 minutes, until wooden pick inserted in centers tests clean. Remove cookies to wire rack to cool. Transfer cookies to wire rack, placing cookies rounded sides down; let cool. Repeat with remaining sheet of cookies.

④ **Black and White Icing.** In medium-size bowl, stir together confectioners' sugar, corn syrup and vanilla; stir in 2 tablespoons plus 1 to 2 teaspoons milk until smooth but thick enough to coat cookie. Remove ¼ cup icing to small bowl; stir in cocoa powder and remaining 2 teaspoons milk until smooth.

⑤ Turn cookies flat sides up. Using a metal spatula, spread white icing over one half of the flat side of each cookie. Clean spatula and spread chocolate icing over the other halves of cookies. Let stand at room temperature until set. Store in airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

PER COOKIE 325 cal, 9g fat (5g sat), 49mg chol, 254mg sodium, 59g carb, 1g fiber, 4g protein

Quick Bite: In general, butter is best for baking cookies because it contributes a rich flavor and consistent results. You can substitute margarine in baking, but only if it contains at least 80 percent fat; however, because there are so many margarine products on the market, finding one with the minimum amount of fat can be tricky. By choosing butter, you can avoid the confusion and cook with confidence.

RASPBERRY-PECAN BARS

MAKES 16 bars **PREP** 15 minutes

BAKE at 350° for 45 minutes

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 10-ounce jar raspberry preserves

① Heat oven to 350°. In a large mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Add sugar; beat until combined. Add the egg; beat until combined. Beat in flour until crumbly. Stir in pecans. Measure 1½ cups of the mixture. Set aside.

② Press the remaining flour mixture into the bottom of an ungreased 8 x 8 x 2-inch baking pan. Spread preserves evenly over crust, leaving a ½-inch border around sides. Crumble reserved mixture over the top.

③ Bake bar at 350° for 45 to 50 minutes until top is browned. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Cut into bars.

PER BAR 308 cal, 17g fat (8g sat), 44mg chol, 92mg sodium, 38g carb, 1g fiber, 3g protein



GINGERBREAD MEN

MAKES 2½ dozen cookies **PREP** 30 minutes
BAKE at 350° for 13 minutes **DECORATE** 1 hour

COOKIES

- 2¾ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup packed dark-brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup original molasses

ROYAL ICING

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1½ tablespoons powdered egg white
- Red Hot cinnamon candies, for decorating

- ① **Cookies.** In a medium-size bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, cloves and salt. Set aside.
- ② In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg, then molasses. Stir flour mixture into butter mixture. Divide dough into 2 halves. Wrap and chill 2 hours.
- ③ Heat oven to 350°. On a well-floured surface, roll half of dough to ⅛-inch thickness. Cut shapes with assorted-size gingerbread cookie cutters; transfer to ungreased baking sheets. Reroll scraps; cut. Repeat with rest of dough.
- ④ Bake at 350° for 13 minutes. Transfer cookies to racks to cool. Decorate with Royal Icing (recipe follows) and assorted candies.

Royal Icing. In a medium-size bowl, combine confectioners sugar, powdered egg whites and 3 tablespoons water. Beat on medium speed for 1 minute to blend, then increase speed to high and beat 5 minutes until thick and shiny. Transfer to a pastry bag fitted with a round tip, or a resealable plastic bag; snip small corner off bag. Pipe icing over cookies and add Red Hot cinnamon candies to decorate.

PER COOKIE 134 cal, 3g fat (2g sat), 15mg chol, 62mg sodium, 25g carb, 0g fiber, 2 g protein



BABY ELEPHANT EARS

MAKES about 3 dozen cookies
PREP 10 minutes **FREEZE** 1 hour
BAKE at 400° for 12 to 14 minutes

- ½ cup sugar, plus more for sprinkling the counter
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 sheet (about 8 ounces) frozen puff pastry dough, thawed but chilled
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

- ① Line several baking sheets with parchment paper. Combine ½ cup of the sugar and the cinnamon in a small bowl. Dust work surface with a tablespoon or two of cinnamon-sugar. Roll out puff pastry on the sugar to 12 x 9 inches.
- ② Brush dough with the beaten egg. Sprinkle cinnamon-sugar mixture over dough, patting it lightly so that it adheres. With the tip of a paring knife, mark a line (but do not cut through) lengthwise down center of dough. Fold long sides of the rectangle toward the center, leaving ⅓ inch uncovered on either side of the line. Then, fold one side of dough over the other; you will have a total of four layers. Wrap in plastic; freeze until firm, at least one hour and up to 2 weeks.

- ③ Heat oven to 400°. Unwrap pastry, and cut into ⅓- to ¼-inch-thick slices. Arrange slices, cut-side down, 1-inch apart on prepared baking sheets. Bake until golden brown, 12 to 14 minutes. Cool on the baking sheets for 15 to 20 minutes and serve at room temperature. Keep at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PER COOKIE 46 cal, 2g fat (0g sat), 6mg chol, 23mg sodium, 7g carb, 0g fiber, 1 g protein

FUDGE BROWNIES WITH MACADAMIA NUTS

MAKES 16 brownies **PREP** 10 minutes
BAKE at 350° for 31 minutes **MICROWAVE** 1 minute

- 1 bag (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- ¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup plus 3 tablespoons chopped macadamia nuts
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

- ① Heat oven to 350°. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick aluminum foil; set aside.
- ② Place 1 cup of the chocolate chips and the butter in a large microwave-safe bowl and microwave for 1 minute. Stir until smooth. Microwave an additional 30 seconds, if needed.
- ③ Whisk in sugar, then eggs. Stir in flour and salt until smooth. Fold in ¾ cup of the chopped macadamia nuts and the vanilla. Transfer batter to prepared pan.
- ④ Bake at 350° for 25 to 29 minutes.
- ⑤ Sprinkle remaining 1 cup chocolate chips over brownie and return to oven for 2 minutes. Remove from oven and spread melted chips until smooth (to form a frosting). Top with remaining 3 tablespoons nuts. Refrigerate 1 hour to firm chocolate, then cut into squares.

PER BROWINE 250 cal, 15g fat (6g sat), 35mg chol, 45mg sodium, 35g carb, 2g fiber, 3g protein





EASY ALMOND MELTAWAYS

MAKES 3 dozen crescents

PREP 10 minutes

CHILL 2 hours

BAKE at 325° for 18 minutes

$\frac{1}{2}$ **cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened**

1 cup confectioners' sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ **teaspoon almond extract**

1 cup all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ **cup finely ground blanched slivered almonds**

① Beat together butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the confectioners' sugar in bowl until smooth and creamy. Beat in almond extract. On low speed, beat in flour and nuts. Wrap dough in plastic wrap; refrigerate until firm, 2 hours.

② Heat oven to 325°. Pinch off pieces of dough in heaping teaspoonfuls. Roll into logs. Taper ends; bend into crescents. Place on ungreased baking sheets.

③ Bake at 325° for 16 to 18 minutes, until lightly browned.

④ Remove cookies to wire rack. While warm, dust with a generous layer of remaining confectioners' sugar. Cool completely. Sprinkle again with any remaining confectioners' sugar.

PER SERVING 61 cal, 4g fat (2g sat), 6g carb

CHERRY-PISTACHIO BISCOTTI

MAKES 2½ dozen **PREP** 15 minutes **CHILL** 2 hours

BAKE at 375° for 23 minutes, then at 325° for 20 minutes

$2\frac{1}{4}$ **cups all-purpose flour**
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ **teaspoons baking powder**
Pinch salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ **cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened**

$\frac{1}{2}$ **cup light-brown sugar**

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

$\frac{1}{2}$ **cup dried tart cherries, chopped**

$\frac{1}{2}$ **cup pistachios, chopped**

3 ounces milk chocolate, melted

① Heat oven to 375°. Mix flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl. Beat butter, sugar in second bowl until creamy. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Add vanilla. Stir in flour mixture. Add cherries and nuts. Gather dough in a ball; divide in 2 halves.

② With floured hands, roll dough into two 12-inch logs. Place on a large ungreased baking sheet. Flatten logs slightly so each is 2 to 3 inches wide.

③ Bake at 375° for 23 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to rack to cool.

④ Lower oven temperature to 325°. Cut loaves into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick slices (about 16 per log). Place, cut-side down, on sheet. Bake 10 minutes. Turn over; bake an additional 10 minutes. Cool on rack. Dip one end in melted chocolate; let dry on waxed paper.

PER COOKIE 95 cal, 4g fat (2g sat), 19g carb

MINT MERINGUES

MAKES about 4½ dozen **PREP** 15 minutes

BAKE at 200° for 2 hours

4 large egg whites, at room temperature

$\frac{1}{2}$ **teaspoon cream of tartar**

$\frac{3}{4}$ **cup sugar**

$\frac{1}{4}$ **teaspoon mint extract or imitation peppermint extract**

Red and green food coloring

2 candy canes, finely crushed

① Heat oven to 200°. Line two large baking sheets with nonstick foil. In a bowl, combine egg whites and cream of tartar. Beat on high speed with whip attachment until whites become foamy. Gradually add sugar, until thick, then add mint extract.

② Divide batter in half; with red food coloring, tint one half pink, and with green food coloring, tint second half green. Transfer to two large resealable bags (or pastry bags fitted with large round tips). Snip a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch corner off bags. Squeeze meringue batter onto foil-lined sheets, about 26 per sheet. Sprinkle each with a little of the crushed candy cane pieces.

③ Bake meringues at 200° for 2 hours, then turn oven off and let cookies sit in oven for 30 minutes. Remove cookies from pans and transfer to a wire rack. Cool completely.

PER MERINGUE 14 cal, 0g fat (0g sat), 3 g carb



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